

**City of Buchanan**  
**Cooperation, Collaboration and Consolidation Plan**  
**2014**

In most cases, the City of Buchanan collects money in the form of taxes, State Revenue Sharing and miscellaneous fees and uses it to coordinate delivery of public services, including, but not limited to:

- Public Safety
  - Police
  - Fire
  - Crossing Guards
  - Code Enforcement
  - Building Inspection
- Public Works
  - Oakridge Cemetery
  - Street Maintenance
  - Fall Leaf Removal
  - Snow Plowing
  - Mowing
  - Park Maintenance
  - Sidewalk & Parking Lot Maintenance
  - Vehicle Maintenance
  - Building & Ground Maintenance
- Park & Recreation
  - Arts & Historical
    - Pears Mill, Farmers' Market, The Common, Harger Park, Tin Shop
  - Parks
    - Kathryn, Ravish, Centennial, Smith
    - McCoy Creek Softball Complex
    - McCoy Creek Trail
  - Rental Property
    - Buchanan Redbud City Center
- Administrative
  - City Commission, City Manager, Clerk, Treasurer & Support Staff
  - Economic Development
  - Elections
  - Property Tax Assessment Services
  - Fire & Liability Insurance
  - Utilities, Gas & Oil, Street Lighting
  - Debt Payments

- Conferences, Workshops, Training & Travel
- Office Supplies, Postage, Computers, Network, Channel 99
- Contractual, Legal Fees, Audit, Legal Notices
- Annual Memberships & Dues
- Tax Collection, Accounting & Secretarial Services

**The City of Buchanan has seen the financial benefit of consolidating and sharing our services and resources with area Municipalities for several years now. The following list represents the City's consolidated services and the taxpayer savings and the additional revenue source associated with the service:**

- Purchased the former Edgewater Bank building at a purchase price of \$204,369, and moved the Police Station from its dilapidated building that was a safety hazard to all who entered. We now lease a small portion of this building back to Edgewater Bank as their goal was to "Right Size" its facility, generating \$13,950 in annual lease payments.
- Mutual Agreement/Purchase of Sewer Camera Truck with Dowagiac City, total cost of \$106,050 split between Buchanan and Dowagiac, saving both municipalities \$53,025.
- Shared Building Inspector Services with the City of Niles, \$25,000 annually
- Property Assessment Services with Berrien County, \$20,000 annually
- Provide Water & Sewer services for local Niles & Buchanan Township residents, revenue generated from township water & sewer usage is approximately \$130,000 annually.
- SEBCL (Southeast Berrien County Landfill), as the City shares ownership of the landfill with Buchanan Township, Niles City, Niles Township and Bertrand Township, the cost savings to our residents is two-fold. Our residents receive a "Resident Dumping Discount" as well as a reduced rate of between \$5 to \$10 per month by Reliable Disposal, the company that is contracted to pick up City residents garbage. The City of Buchanan also benefits by the lower monthly pick-up service fee for our city owned parks and buildings.
- 425 Agreement with Buchanan Township, revenue generated annually is \$40,000.

**The following list represents services and/or committees that the City of Buchanan partners with in hopes of seeking additional funding and support with our surrounding municipalities by combining efforts to save money and resources for everyone living in our community. The cost savings is not the main factor in determining the success of the organization or committee, but the impact of our resident's quality of life, future road improvements, business opportunities and job creation.**

- Police First Response with Buchanan, Niles and Bertrand Townships
- Southwest Michigan Planning Commission
- SMEGA (Southwestern Michigan Economic Growth Alliance) is a resource area municipalities share in acquiring and negotiating future businesses to our area.
- NATS – This is a regional group of municipalities including Buchanan City, Buchanan Township, Niles City, Niles Township, Bertrand Township, Cass County and Berrien County that combine efforts in managing funds to maintain and improve roads
- SMCAS Ambulance Service (Southwestern Michigan Community Ambulance Service)

**The following list includes projects reported last year for new cooperation, collaboration or consolidations planned with estimated potential savings:**

- Fire District Consolidation Study which started early 2012, projects cost savings estimated at \$30,000 annually and long term savings of over \$500,000 due to not having to build a new fire station.  
2014 Update~ The Consolidation study is still ongoing, but we are optimistic that in the near future Buchanan Township, Bertrand Township and the City of Buchanan can agree on a system that will consolidate the three departments. A major barrier in the consolidation plan is agreeing on a system that does not compromise each department’s mission to provide the best service to all citizens within their jurisdictions. It is unknown at this time when this project may be finalized but the City of Buchanan would hope to see the project done by the end of 2015. Each department is working together to come up with a plan that would allow each community the opportunity to maintain a level of ownership of a department the volunteer firefighters have worked diligently to build.
- Berrien County Public Transit Consolidation which started in June 2011, cost savings estimated at \$5,000 annually.  
2014 Update~ The study is still ongoing, with meetings held between all Berrien County Transit systems. It was anticipated that the completed study will be presented to us in 2013 calendar year. One major barrier in completing this study is the fact that MDOT has been holding up the grant money that pays for this study, per Kim Gallagher from Southwest Michigan Planning Commission.

**The following list includes proposals we are currently researching to increase existing level of cooperation, collaboration or consolidation:**

- In the fall of 2011, the City started working with SMCAS Ambulance Service to house an ambulance in an existing City owned building in hopes to increase emergency care response time to our residents and share building and utility costs with SMCAS, Southwestern Michigan Community Ambulance Service.

2014 Update~ SMCAS and the City of Buchanan are still working on finding the best location for housing an ambulance to be stationed in the City limits. A barrier in finalizing this project is that one option that is being researched by both parties is to include a parking stall for an ambulance in the Fire District Consolidation Study. It is unknown at this time when this project may be completed as it will probably be included in the Fire District Consolidation plan (explained above).
- In January 2013, The Buchanan Area Recreation Board (BARB) started investigating the creation of a Parks and Recreation District, similar to our existing Public Library District, to help support the cost of maintaining our park system and also to fund the park improvements identified in our recreation plan. The proposed district would encompass the City of Buchanan, Buchanan Township, Bertrand Township and Niles Charter Township. The feeling is that many non-Buchanan residents use our parks and recreational facilities, but the cost maintaining and improving these facilities currently falls solely on the shoulders of the taxpayers of the City of Buchanan. The Board would like to see these costs evenly distributed among the users of the facilities. It is the goal of the BARB to complete this study in the 2014 calendar year. The City's goal is to save approximately \$10,000 annually by implementing the Parks and Recreation District.

2014 Update~ The Buchanan Area Recreation Board (BARB) is still in the investigation and research portion of this venture with hopes to complete the study in late 2014.

**The following describes a new project we are currently researching to increase existing level of cooperation, collaboration or consolidation:**

- The City of Buchanan plans to approach the City of Niles with regard to renting our newly purchased Total Patcher to help defray the cost of purchasing the equipment as well as saving Niles City thousands of dollars in road maintenance costs annually.
- The City of Buchanan plans to approach the City of Niles and the City of Dowagiac in renting our newly purchased GPS system to help defray cost of purchasing the equipment as well as saving both Niles and Dowagiac a significant amount of money versus purchasing their own equipment.